

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims below will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1-36. (Cancelled)

37. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a computing device as a first peer in a peer-to-peer network wherein said first peer is adapted to perform a supportee-operative role in relation to a second peer in the peer-to-peer network, the second peer being a subject of the support role, comprising:

- a) establishing contact between the first peer and the second peer ~~which is to be the subject of the co-operative role~~; and
- b) providing said support to the second peer ~~operation~~.

38. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a peer-to-peer network with a first peer and a second peer, wherein the first peer is a super-peer, which is adapted to perform a supportee-operative role and the second peer being a subject of the support role, comprising:

- a) the super-peer receiving notification that the supportee-operative role is requested;
- b) the super-peer establishing contact with the second peer ~~which is to be the subject of the co-operative role~~; and
- c) providing supportee-operative between the first and second peers.

39. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 38, wherein the peer-to-peer network further comprises a third peer, wherein the third peer is a second super peer, and any of steps a) to c) are assigned to, and performed by, the third peer.

40. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 38, wherein the ~~supporter~~operative role is a holding role to hold data for the benefit of the second peer, where the holding role includes the steps of the super-peer:

- d) receiving data;
- e) recording the received data;
- f) receiving requests for the received data from users of the network or a process running on the network;
- g) retrieving the received data based on the request; and
- h) transmitting the received data to the requesting user or process.

41. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, further comprising the steps of the super-peer:

receiving further data;

wherein step (d) includes the step of the super-peer:

- (d1) processing the received data based on the further data.

42. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, further comprising the step of the super-peer:

- i) receiving further data with the received data;
- j) wherein step (d) includes the step of:

(d1) the super-peer processing the received data based on the further data.

43. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42, wherein the peer-to-peer network contains a third peer and step (d) includes the step of:

(d1) performing operations which result in one or more transmissions to the third peer.

44. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42, wherein the peer-to-peer network contains a third peer and step (f) includes the step of:

(f1) performing operations which result in one or more transmissions to the third peer.

45. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, wherein step (d) includes the step of:

(d1) performing operations which affect the received data, or which affect other data previously recorded or which result in one or more transmissions to the second peer.

46. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40, wherein step (f) includes the step of:

(f1) performing operations which affect the request, or which affect data previously recorded or which result in one or more transmissions to the second peer.

47. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 40 wherein the supportee-operative role corresponds to the super-peer being a witness to a transaction.
48. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40 wherein the stored data corresponds to links to other peers.
49. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 48 wherein the links constitute a neural network having statistical attributes which indicate characteristics of the link such as usability or popularity.
50. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 38, wherein the supportee-operative role is an assignment role to assign one or more operations to the second peer, where the assignment role includes the steps of:
- d) the super-peer deciding that the second peer is required to perform an operation;
 - e) selecting the second peer from a list of peers that are available;
 - f) retrieving details of the second peer; and
 - g) instructing the second peer to perform the operation.
51. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 50, including the further steps of:
- h) assessing the peers in the list of available peers; and
 - i) recording the results of the assessing step.

52. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 38, wherein the ~~supportee-operative~~ role is a sharing role to share performance of an operation with the second peer, the sharing role including the steps of:

- d) the super-peer receiving notification that a peering relationship is required, a peering relationship being a method of operating with the second peer so as to share the performance of an operation;
- e) determining an identity of a sibling required to implement the peering relationship, the sibling being the second peer;
- f) establishing a peering relationship with the sibling;
- g) maintaining synchronization between a database on the super-peer and a database on the sibling.

53. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 52, wherein the peer-to-peer network comprises a third peer, the sharing role including the step of:

- h) replacing the sibling with a second sibling as required, the second sibling being the third peer.

54. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 52, wherein the peer-to-peer network comprises a third peer, the sharing role including the step of:

- h) creating a third sibling as required, the third sibling being the third peer.

55. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 52, wherein step (g) includes the steps of:

- (g1) handling a request related to the operation if it does not affect a state of the operation; and

(g2) transmitting the request to the sibling, if the super-peer is unable to handle the request.

56. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 52, wherein step (g) includes the steps of:

(g1) handling a request related to the operation if it does affect a state of the operation; and

(g2) transmitting the request to the sibling.

57. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 52, wherein step (f) includes the steps of:

(g1) confirming that the notification that the support role is requested received by the super-peer is the same as a request received by and the sibling ~~have received the same request~~, before handling a request related to the operation; and

(g2) handling the request independently upon confirmation.

58. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 52, wherein the super-peer and the sibling are arranged so that:

one of the super-peer and the sibling is operable to receive ~~incorporate functionality related to receiving data~~; and

the other one of the super-peer and the sibling is operable to process and record ~~not receiving data incorporate functionality related to processing or recording~~ the data.

59. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 52 wherein the ~~supportee-operative~~ role corresponds to the super-peer performing joint or jury-peering in relation to a transaction.

60. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 38, wherein the ~~supportee-operative~~ role is an interfacing role to provide users not able to access the network with an interface to the network, where the interfacing role includes the steps of:

- d) the super-peer receiving data from a user who is unable to access the network, wherein the data is received independently of the network;
- e) executing the data;
- f) obtaining results of the execution; and
- g) transmitting the results to the user, wherein the results are transmitted independently of the network.

61. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 60 wherein the first and second peers perform cooperative peering thereby allowing a jury function to be performed by the first and second peer in relation to a transaction.

62. (Currently Amended) The method according to any of claims 47, 59, or 61, wherein the transaction corresponds to a sale, swap, auction, bid, exchange, distribution of information or other transaction which is amenable to supervision, authorization~~authorisation~~, validation or distribution.

63. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 38, including the further steps of:

- d) the super-peer interfacing with a user not located on the network;
- e) the super-peer reformatting data for the user to view.

64. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a computing device as a first peer in a peer-to-peer network, wherein the peer-to-peer network comprises a second and third peer, the first peer being adapted to dynamically support an interaction between the second and third peers who are otherwise communicating with each other directly, the method including the steps of:

- a) the first peer establishing contact with the second and third peers which are to be supported; and
- b) providing said support.

65-82. (Cancelled)